



Pupil premium strategy statement

This statement details our school's use of pupil premium funding to help improve the attainment of our disadvantaged pupils.

It outlines our pupil premium strategy, how we intend to spend the funding in this academic year and the effect that last year's spending of pupil premium had within our school.

School overview

Detail	Data
School name	Thomas Harding Junior School
Number of pupils in school	227
Proportion (%) of pupil premium eligible pupils	2025-26 30%
Academic year/years that our current pupil premium strategy plan covers	2024-2027
Date this statement was published	Autumn 2025
Date on which it will be reviewed	Autumn 2026
Statement authorised by	Samantha Ruddell Headteacher
Pupil premium lead	Alison Arnott Inclusion Manager
Governor / Trustee lead	Viraj Rajadhyaksha Pupil Premium Governor

Funding overview

Detail	Amount
Pupil premium funding allocation this academic year	£79,920
Recovery premium funding allocation this academic year	£0
Pupil premium funding carried forward from previous years (enter £0 if not applicable)	£0

Part A: Pupil premium strategy plan

Statement of intent

At Thomas Harding Junior School, we have high aspirations and ambitions for our children, and we believe that no child should be disadvantaged for any reason. We strongly believe that it is not about where you come from but your passion and thirst for knowledge, and your dedication and commitment to learning that make the

difference between success and failure. We are determined to ensure that all our children are given every chance to realise their potential.

When making decisions about using pupil premium funding it is important to consider the context of the school, and the subsequent challenges faced. Common barriers for FSM children can be less support at home, weak language and communication skills, lack of confidence, more frequent behaviour difficulties, and attendance and punctuality issues. There may also be complex family situations that prevent children from flourishing. The challenges are varied and there is no “one size fits all”.

Key Principles:

By following the key principles below, we believe we can maximise the impact of our pupil premium spending.

Building Belief

We will provide a culture where:

- staff believe in all children.
- there are “no excuses” made for underperformance.
- staff adopt a “solution-focused” approach to overcoming barriers.

staff support children to develop positive mindsets towards learning.

Analysing Data

We will ensure that:

- All staff are involved in the analysis of data so that they are fully aware of strengths and areas for development across the school.
- All governors, but especially the pupil premium champion, are involved in data analysis.
- We use research to support us in determining the strategies that will be most effective.

Identification of Pupils

We will ensure that:

- All teaching staff and support staff are involved in the analysis of data and identification of pupils.
- All staff are aware of who pupil premium and vulnerable children are.
- All pupil premium children benefit from the funding, not just those who are underperforming.
- Underachievement at all levels is targeted (not just lower attaining pupils)
- Children’s individual needs are considered carefully so that we provide support for those children who could be doing “even better if....”

Teacher Development

We will continue to ensure that **all** children across the school receive at least good teaching, with increasing percentages of outstanding teaching achieved by:

- Setting high expectations of teaching staff
- Ensuring consistent implementation of the school policies
- Sharing good practice within the school and draw on external expertise.
- Providing high quality CPD
- Maintaining highly accurate assessment through joint levelling and moderation

Individualising support

- We will ensure that the additional support we provide is effective by:
- Looking at the individual needs of each child and identifying their barriers to learning
- Ensuring additional support staff and class teachers communicate regularly.
- Matching the skills of the support staff to the interventions they provide
- Providing extensive support for parents to develop their own skills (, Literacy, Maths, e-safety, ICT,) to support their children’s learning within the curriculum to ensure that they are best equipped to support the needs of their children.
- Tailoring interventions to the needs of the child (e.g. Targeted maths and English pre-teaching and revision sessions in the afternoons)

- Recognising and building on children's strengths to further boost confidence particularly in sports, the arts and in music.

Challenges

This details the key challenges to achievement that we have identified among our disadvantaged pupils.

Challenge number	Detail of challenge
1.	Readiness to learn for the most disadvantaged pupils, particularly for those that are also SEND. For many of our pupils, the skills of self-regulation and stamina for learning need to be taught and embedded for them to make progress.
2.	Many of our children on entry lack the wider vocabulary and syntax styles needed to fully access the wider curriculum.
3.	Many of our children would benefit from developing cultural capital
4.	Progress of those identified as disadvantaged is below their peers.
5.	Children to further develop their resilience strategies to assist their Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) need.
6.	Attendance and punctuality for a large proportion of children
7.	Parental engagement

Intended outcomes

This explains the outcomes we are aiming for **by the end of our current strategy plan**, and how we will measure whether they have been achieved.

Intended outcome	Success criteria
Improved oral language skills and vocabulary among disadvantaged pupils.	Assessments and observations indicate significantly improved oral language among disadvantaged pupils. This is evident when triangulated with other sources of evidence, including engagement in

	lessons, book scrutiny and ongoing formative assessment. Fluency is evident, both verbally and in written tasks. Verbal contributions to whole class discussions increases. Children are able to verbally express any challenges and are more self-regulated.
Improved attainment in reading, writing and maths for our disadvantaged pupils.	Improve attainment of disadvantaged pupils to be in line with non-disadvantaged peers.
Improving attendance for the most disadvantaged pupils An increased number to meet the Multiplication Timetables Check at the end of year 4	Improve attendance of disadvantaged pupils to be in line with non-disadvantaged peers. <i>UK data shows <u>Pupil Premium (PP)</u> (disadvantaged) children have significantly lower attendance and higher <u>persistent/severe absence</u> than their peers, a gap widening post-pandemic, with recent data (2024/25) showing around 1 in 5 PP students persistently absent, much higher than pre-COVID, impacting achievement, as shown by recent DfE reports and analysis from the Children's Commissioner. While overall absence is slowly decreasing, severe absence remains elevated, with PP pupils consistently facing greater barriers to consistent school attendance, requiring targeted support.</i>
To achieve and sustain improved wellbeing for all pupils in our school, particularly our disadvantaged pupils.	Sustained high levels of wellbeing demonstrated by: • qualitative data from student voice, student and parent surveys and teacher observations • a significant increase in participation in enrichment activities, particularly among disadvantaged pupils • improved readiness/capacity to learn. • Reduced incidents of behaviour linked to emotional need, with fewer referrals, exclusions or time out of class for identified pupils. 2023 – 2024 25% PP of all incidents reported under Mental Health
To achieve parent/carers attendance – especially of those considered 'hard to reach' - to parents' evening and at least one event every half term.	• Attendance of parents identified as in receipt of Pupil Premium is in line with non.

	• An Increase in parent numbers at curriculum events • Increased attendance at parents' evenings, with a higher proportion of identified 'hard-to-reach' families attending compared to previous years.
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This details how we intend to spend our pupil premium **this academic year** to address the challenges listed above.

Teaching (for example, CPD, recruitment and retention)

Budgeted cost: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Purchase of standardised diagnostic assessments. (<i>National Test-style Standardised Assessments - NTS</i>) Training for staff to ensure assessments are interpreted and administered correctly (Sandwell & Nara). Purchase of Boxall profile EBPs assessments	Standardised tests can provide reliable insights into the specific areas of need of each pupil to help ensure they receive the correct additional support through interventions or teacher instruction. Reading ages gained to measures small steps of progress. This data is used to assess the impact of class teaching as well as intervention. The Boxall Profile is a psychosocial assessment tool used to determine children's social and emotional functioning and wellbeing. An online tool to assess and support the social, emotional and mental development of children. It provides a picture of a pupil's areas in need of development to inform staff of how to better support these children. Improved outcomes would include an improvement in: Their ability to learn and retain information. Improved learning and social behaviour Improved attendance and wellbeing.	1,2 & 4
Purchase of assessment to establish children's cognitive profiles and therefore 'readiness to learn'.	To develop teaching strategies/classroom practise to target specific areas of need – for example verbal sequential, visual sequential and auditory sequential.	
Maths coordinator to complete the NCETM maths	Professional Development – to develop ways to further improve classroom practice and pedagogy	

– Bucks, Berks and Oxon hub embedding phase.	with professional development that leads to improved maths teaching for all.	
CPD We will purchase resources and fund ongoing teacher training and release time. CAMHS & SaLT Diagnostic assessment training Behaviour management strategy training. For example Step On/Step Up	Courses develop knowledge and therefore further improve the teaching and intervention delivered by teaching staff. Courses will address Mental Health and well-beings needs as well as academic needs. To become a Rainbows school. To support children who have experienced loss and bereavement and other Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) – Inclusion Manager and Family Liaison Officer. National College CPD, SENCO (NPQ) – Learning Support Assistant & Head Teacher TAs in SEND training	1,2 & 4
Review of teaching opportunities to further develop well-being	Social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions seek to improve pupils' decision-making skills, interaction with others and their self-management of emotions.	1,4,5 & 6
CPD for teachers and support staff on the teaching of vocabulary and how to monitor this in class for all pupils, with a focus on disadvantaged pupils.	The EEF guide to pupil premium shows that oral language approaches which explicitly extends pupils' spoken vocabulary adds 6 months of impact to pupil learning.	2
Continued development of the teaching of phonics for staff using high quality resources (including books) to secure stronger phonics teaching for all pupils but especially those who are disadvantaged.	Phonics approaches have a strong evidence base that indicates a positive impact on the accuracy of word reading (though not necessarily comprehension), particularly for disadvantaged pupils:	1,2 & 4
CPD training to support a change in behaviour culture of key disadvantaged children around school and improve their learning experience.	EEF research shows that Social and emotional learning (SEL) support improves children's outcomes at school and later in life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour, and relationships with peers)	5
Whole school approach and CPD and refresher training for Zones of Regulation, or an equivalent scheme.	EEF research shows that Social and emotional learning (SEL) support improves children's outcomes at school and later in life (e.g., improved academic performance, attitudes, behaviour, and relationships with peers)	5

Inclusion Manager to support teachers to model and embed Zones of Regulation strategies and language.		
METACOGNITION AND SELF-REGULATED LEARNING Teachers to acquire the professional understanding and skills to develop their pupils' metacognitive knowledge. Teachers to explicitly teach children metacognitive strategies, including how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning. Model your own thinking to help pupils develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills	EEF evidence suggests the use of 'metacognitive strategies' – which get pupils to think about their own learning – can be worth the equivalent of an additional +7 months' progress when used well. The potential impact of these approaches is very high, particularly for disadvantaged pupils.	1
CPD delivered to continue to enhance Quality First Teaching with a focus on Mastery.	Like "mastery learning", "teaching for mastery" aims to support all pupils to achieve deep understanding and competence in the relevant topic. However, "teaching for mastery" is characterised by teacher-led, whole-class teaching; common lesson content for all pupils; and use of manipulatives and representations. The impact of mastery learning approaches is an additional five months progress, on average, over the course of a year. Mastery learning also appears to be particularly effective when pupils are given opportunities to work in groups or teams and take responsibility for supporting each other's progress – this links with Collaborative learning and Peer tutoring. Mastery learning approaches aim to ensure that all pupils have mastered key concepts before moving on to the next topic – in contrast with traditional teaching methods in which pupils may be left behind, with gaps of misunderstanding widening. Mastery learning approaches could address these challenges by giving additional time and support to pupils who may have missed learning, or take longer to master new knowledge and skills. In order for mastery approaches to be effective for pupils with gaps in understanding, it is crucial that	4

	additional support is provided. Approaches that simply build upon foundational knowledge without targeting support for pupils that fall behind are unlikely to narrow disadvantage gaps.	
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Targeted academic support (for example, tutoring, one-to-one support structured interventions)

Budgeted cost: £30,000

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
Phonics training	Courses develop knowledge and therefore further improve the teaching and intervention delivered by teaching staff. Staff to receive refresher course and new staff to be trained	1 & 4
Books to match gaps in phonics	Reading books to specifically targeting gaps in phonics knowledge will provide practice of these gaps in knowledge and correct errors in pronunciation.	1 & 4
CPD OF Learning Support Assistants to further develop the teaching of interventions.	The delivery of high-quality, structured and targeted interventions which deliver short sessions, over a finite period, and link learning to classroom teaching show positive benefits.	4
Read, Write Inc training for all new staff as well as refreshers.	EEF research of impact states the potential for six additional months of progress being achieved. Reading comprehension strategies focus on the learners' understanding of written text. Pupils learn a range of techniques which enable them to comprehend the meaning of what they read. These can include inferring meaning from context; summarising or identifying key points; using graphic or semantic organisers; developing questioning strategies; and monitoring their own comprehension and then identifying and resolving difficulties for themselves	4
Whole class reading sets of books for guided reading activities.		
New banded age-appropriate books		
Fluency Factory	Reading fluency is the ability to read accurately, smoothly and with expression. Fluent readers recognise words automatically,	4

Herts for Learning – Fluency training	without struggling to decode. Fluent readers group words rapidly to help gain meaning from their reading, which then translates into their understanding of the text. When reading aloud, fluent readers sound natural, as if they are speaking. Non-fluent readers read slowly, and the text sounds disjointed. Fluency is important because it builds a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. It allows students time to focus on what the text is saying, therefore, they are able to concentrate on comprehension. On the other hand, non-fluent readers have to spend more time decoding, leaving less time for comprehending the text. Due to mistakes made when reading, they will often have to read the same passage over several times to attain comprehension.
EdShed - SpellingShed	Spelling Shed is based on research into the teaching of spelling. Spelling Shed uses the Science of Spelling to teach spelling, which includes using phonics as a base and drawing upon proven approaches such as teaching morphology, etymology and orthographic mapping as well as explicitly teaching spelling patterns.

Wider strategies (for example, related to attendance, behaviour, wellbeing)

Budgeted cost: £19,920.00

Activity	Evidence that supports this approach	Challenge number(s) addressed
To carefully monitor attendance and act swiftly when there are dips. To support children who are struggling to attend due to Emotional Based School Avoidance (EBSA).	Evidence suggests that a robust approach to attendance improves parental involvement, and pupils therefore attend more often and on time. Using a partnership approach protects our relationship with families.	6
Family Liaison Officer	The FLO provides support and information, in a sensitive and compassionate manner, securing confidence and trust of families. They ensure family members are given information in accordance with their needs and those of their children. The FLO also addresses	5 & 7

	attendance challenges facing our children and improves attendance, especially of those children most vulnerable. The FLO also accommodates the needs for movement breaks, time outs and social interaction intervention. ‘Nurture’ group work is delivered.	
Lego Therapy	Lego-based therapy (LeGoff et al 2014) is an evidence-based approach that aims to develop social communication skills in autistic children, such as sharing, turn-taking, following rules, using names and problem-solving. Significant development of listening skills, turn taking, joint attention, resilience, patience, perseverance, and problem solving. Children demonstrate a greater awareness of social expectations. Children develop a team approach to problem solving. An increase in the development of language. Children become motivated to understand and use language they initially found challenging. Improvements in the length of spoken sentences and the grammatical structures of sentences used. Increased self-esteem in majority of children. Improvements in the flexibility of language used – children adapt vocabulary to accommodate the needs of their listener. Behaviour that indicates an increased awareness of the feelings of others.	5
Parent workshops delivered both internally and by external providers to upskill parents.	Workshops delivered by subject leaders to support/widen parents’ understanding of subjects and strategies to support their children at home. FLO to arrange to host parent workshops within school. Flo and Inclusion Manager to	1,4,5,6 & 7

Social media used to signpost parents to available courses/parenting groups.	also signpost parents to courses relating to their child's specific needs.	
Trips	Stepping outside of the usual classroom environment and participating in external, interactive learning experiences brings learning to life. These experiences tie learning to personal experiences and memories, helping children develop a deeper understanding of subjects and topics. Children explore the world around them and gain cultural capital. For many students, visual and sensory experiences and cues benefit their grasp and deepened understanding of topics being covered and these experiences outside the classroom promote positive engagement with people, places, activities and new environments.	3

Total budgeted cost: ££79,920

Part B: Review of outcomes in the previous academic year

Pupil premium strategy outcomes

This details the impact that our pupil premium activity had on pupils in the previous academic year.

Pupil Premium Strategy Review

Intent

The school's Pupil Premium strategy is designed to reduce attainment gaps and ensure that disadvantaged pupils achieve in line with, or above, national expectations. A strong emphasis is placed on high-quality teaching, early identification of need, and targeted intervention to address gaps in learning.

Key priorities include:

- Disadvantaged pupils, demonstrate improved readiness to learn, with increased self-regulation, sustained concentration, and greater stamina for learning, enabling them to make stronger progress.
- Developing pupils' vocabulary and oracy to enhance access to the full curriculum
- Children demonstrate increased cultural capital, reflected in their broader knowledge, enriched experiences, and improved ability to engage with and understand the wider world.
- Improving academic outcomes across reading, writing, and mathematics, narrowing the gap between in comparison to their peers.
- Pupils build resilience and maintain positive emotional wellbeing in order to thrive.

The strategy is underpinned by research, including evidence from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), particularly around effective intervention, metacognition, and oral language development.

Implementation

The school has implemented a range of carefully planned and regularly reviewed approaches to support disadvantaged pupils:

Quality First Teaching and Targeted Academic Support

- High-quality teaching for all pupils, with a focus on explicit vocabulary instruction and pre-teaching of subject-specific language
- Structured one-to-one and small group interventions, informed by EEF research
- Flexible intervention timetables that are regularly reviewed to ensure maximum impact
- Early identification and addressing of knowledge gaps prior to whole-class teaching

Vocabulary and Oracy Development

- Systematic pre-teaching of vocabulary to ensure pupils can access new learning
- Planned opportunities for structured talk (e.g. paired discussion, group work, presentations)
- Consistent emphasis on Tier 2 and subject-specific vocabulary across the curriculum

Wider Strategies: Attendance, Engagement and Wellbeing

- Targeted support to improve attendance and punctuality, including work with families
- Increased access to extracurricular opportunities, such as running club, to improve engagement and readiness to learn
- Regular wellbeing check-ins and monitoring of pupil voice
- Provision to support emotional wellbeing and reduce barriers to learning

Parental Engagement

- Publishing parties provide an outcome and audience for writing
- Introduction of an Inclusion Coffee Mornings to strengthen relationships with families
- Provision map meetings with the Inclusion Manager and SEN assistant, enabling parents to:
 - review their child's progress
 - understand support in place
 - share views and ask questions
 - agree next steps collaboratively

Impact

The strategy is having a clear and measurable impact across attainment, engagement, and wellbeing:

Academic Outcomes

- Combined expected standard (EXS): **55%**, above national (**47%**)
- Reading: **73% EXS**, 10% above national
- Writing: **64% EXS**, 5% above national
- Mathematics: **82% EXS**, 21% above national and 1% above non-disadvantaged national pupils

Teacher assessment and work scrutiny show improved quality, accuracy, and independence in reading comprehension, writing, and mathematical reasoning. Intervention data demonstrates accelerated progress for targeted pupils.

Assessment trends over time show a reduction in lower attainment and increasing proportions of pupils achieving higher scores, indicating sustained improvement.

Vocabulary, Oracy and Engagement

- Pupils demonstrate a wider and more precise use of vocabulary, including Tier 2 and subject-specific language
- Increased confidence and participation in structured talk activities
- Improved quality and length of pupil responses
- Positive impact on reading comprehension and wider literacy outcomes

Cultural capital

- Pupils access a wider range of enrichment opportunities, including sports clubs, educational visits, themed curriculum days, resulting in increased engagement and confidence when participating in learning experiences.
- Pupil voice indicates that disadvantaged pupils feel more able to talk about the wider world, drawing on experiences from trips, assemblies, and enrichment activities to make connections in lessons.
- Teachers report improved background knowledge in subjects such as history, geography, and science, enabling pupils to participate more fully in class discussions and demonstrate deeper understanding.
- Increased participation in extracurricular activities has broadened pupils' interests and supported the development of new skills, contributing to greater readiness to learn and improved self-belief.
- Targeted pupils demonstrate greater curiosity and willingness to try unfamiliar activities, reflecting strengthened cultural capital and increased confidence in navigating new environments.

Attendance and Readiness to Learn

- Attendance remains a focus, one that is vigorously monitored: low attendance is promptly acted upon and intervention and strategies are deployed to such an improvement:
 - 2024–25 FSM: **92.5%** (national 92.4%)
- Improved punctuality for targeted pupils (e.g. reduction from 29.8% to 9.72% lateness for one identified pupil)
- Increased participation in extracurricular activities contributing to improved readiness to learn and experiences for identified children

Wellbeing and Behaviour

- Improved emotional wellbeing, evidenced through pupil voice, wellbeing monitoring, and teacher observations
- Reduction in mental health and wellbeing incidents (51% currently in 2025–26, compared to 53% in 2024–25, noting previous recording changes)
- Increased engagement, confidence, and positive learning behaviours

Parental Engagement

- Strong attendance at Inclusion Coffee Mornings (12 parents)
- Positive uptake of provision map meetings (8 parents attending)
- Improved communication and collaboration between school and families

Overall, the Pupil Premium strategy is effectively supporting disadvantaged pupils to make strong progress academically while also improving their confidence, engagement, and wellbeing.